FOREIGN GOSSIP.

—The cost of cremating a corpse in Paris has been reduced to three dollars.

—English ladies who sympathize with Mr. Gladstone wear badges of silver made in the shape of a thistle.

—The monks of Altotting, in Bavaria, have in their keeping the hearts of a long line of Kings. The hearts are in silver urns.

—The Jewish population of Jerusalem is constantly increasing, and now numbers 18,000. Th's is the largest number that has lived in the sacred city at one time since the destruction by Titus in 70 A. D.

—The deaths resulting from colliery explosions in England for the year 1885 were much more numerous than for several years previous, being 325, against 60 in 1884 and 134 in 1883.

—The rat'o of crime among offenders under age has considerably more than doubled during the past five years in France, and the statistics register for the first time numerous cases of suicide committed by children.

—The London *Caterer* says, appropos of beans, that the priests of Egypt held it a crime even to look at beans—the very sight of them unclean. The Romans ate beans at funerals, with awe, from the idea that the souls of the dead were in them.

—Upon her ascension to the throne Queen Victoria appointed a Hebrew (Sir Moses Montefiore) as sheriff of London, and now, at the beginning of the fiftieth year of her reign, another Hebrew (Alderman Isaacs) has been ap pointed to the same office.

—Forty-nine tons of snails are consumed daily in Par's during their season. They are boiled in five or six waters, extracted from the shell, dressed with fresh butter and garlic, then replaced in the shell, covered with parsley and bread-crumbs, and finally simmered in white wine.

—The work of emancipating slaves in Cuba is being gradually accomplished. In May 102 slaves were set free at Union de Reyes, 110 at Cuevitas and 153 at Alfonso XII. From May 8, 1880, to the beginning of May, 1886, 29,406 slaves were given their liberty in the province of Santa Clara.

—A correspondent of the *Kolnische Zeitung* reports that torture has at last been abolished in Guatemala. Those who henceforth employ it, whether civil officers or members of the army, are punishable with imprisonment of from six months to two years, and with deposition from office, and if death results from torture, the guilty person is to be tr ed for murder.

—Magnesium, which has more than once been employed as a source of light, appears likely to be employed again, a process having been d scovered for producing pure magnesium by electroiysis, and at a price much less than that at which it was formerly obtainable. At the works in Bremen, where the manufacture of magnesium is carried on, prizes are offered for the construction of the best magnesium lamps having clockwork movement.

—The owner of a cherry tree which stood is the way of a German railroad extension (near Niederlahnstein) is said to have asked nine hundred dollars for the tree. Experts were appointed, and, as he showed that for years it had yielded him crops each of which had been so'd for a sum equivalent to the interest on the amount asked, they agreed to award him six hundred dollars, and the tree had to go.

THE EYE STONE.

The Useful Work Done by a Curious and Lively Little Bone.

"Yes, we keep eye stones," said an up-town druggist, "but we don't have a call for one once in five years. Yet there must be quite a demand for them, for wholesale dealers purchase all that are brought them by sailors who make a business of collecting them on their voyages. Did you ever see an eye stone?"

"No," said the reporter. "But they are found in the stomach of crayfish, I believe."

"Then your belief is about as far wrong as it could be," said the druggist, as he took a small bottle from a drawer. It was half full of what seemed to be very small, round, flat pieces of polished bone. Emptying a few of the pieces on the counter he picked one up and handed it to the reporter to examine. There was nothing notable about the little bone except that one side was composed of numerous concentric grooves.

"That is an eye stone," said the druggist, pouring some liquid out of a bottle on a smooth plate and diluting it with water. "And this is a weak solution of lime juice."

The druggist took one of the eye stones and put it into the solution. Presently the stone began to move as if it were alive. It made its way slowly about in different directions in the liquid in a mysterious manner.

"That strange movement of the eye stone when placed in a weak solution of lime juice or vinegar has given rise among ignorant and superstitious people to the notion that it has life, and that it loves vinegar, and loves to swim in it above all things. But there is no more life in an eye stone than there is in a paving stone. It is composed of calcareous material, and when placed in the solutions named is made to move about by carbonic acid gas, which is evolved by the contact w th the liquid acid. These little stones and all genuine eye stones once were the front doors to the shells of a little molluscous animal that lives along the Venezuelan and other South American coasts. The shell is a univalve. This calcareous formation is on the tip end of the little animal, and when he draws himself into his shell to escape d nger or go to sleep, the end, of course, is the last part of him that is drawn into the cavity or mouth of the shell, where it fits so closely and is so hard that it affords perfect protection to the animal against enemies from without. The nat ve inhabitants collect the eye stones in large quantities, and regard them with great awe. Sailors engaged on the fruit trading vessels that visit these regions obtain the stones and fetch them to New York for sale to the wholesale druggists.

"There are two little bones found in the head of the crayfish, just back of and beneath the eyes, which resemble the eye stone, except that they are smooth all over. These are called eye stones, and are used as such in Ohio and other Western States, but they have none of the virtues of the real eye stone. The proper name for the stone found in the crayfish is crab stones. In Poland and parts of Russia quite a trade is done in collecting crab stones. The crayfish are buried in deep pits, and left there until they rot. The refuse is then washed and the stones are picked out. They are used in many parts of Europe as a corrective of the stomach.

"There is nothing better to remove foreign substances from the eye than one of these South American eye stones. Before using them many people think it necessary to put them in vinegar 'to give them life,' but it is not necessary. The stone is inserted at the corner of the eye, with the grooved side next to the lid. The pressure of the eye-ball forces it to move about in the eye, and the grooves collect the foreign matter and retain it. After making a thorough circuit of the eye the stone will come out at the corner next the nose. No inconvenience is caused by its presence in the eye."—*N. Y. Sun.*

DOCTORING CIGARS.

How Tobacco is Made Glossy and Supplied With a Salable Color.

A veteran in the tobacco trade, who is the possessor of over twenty patents for the sweating and coloring of tobacco for cigar uses, said when asked by a reporter what was new regarding tobacco, that the most noteworthy feature of the trade just now is the change in the home production from the old-fashioned "seed-leaf" to the "Havana seed." The grades thus produced are the Wilson hybrid, the Zimmer Spanish and the Haines. The growers of Ohio, Pennsylvania and New York are cultivating these hybrid varieties largely, and the result is proving most satisfactory, the Havana flavor remaining distinctly throughout many successive crops. A noticeable increase in the cultivation of tobacco is noticed in Pennsylvania and Wisconsin, and the demand for cigars is increasing in a marked degree over the whole country. In speaking of the experiments made to color tobacco properly for use in cigars the reporter's informant said:

"To remove the gum and improve the quality and take the swelling out of the leaf, it must be subjected to such a degree of heat as will accomplish those objects. The same is true if dark, uniform and shining glossy colors are wanted. You can not make dark colors and improve the quality of a tobacco at the same and under the same degree of heat. People often experiment a long time and spend a great deal of money before they discover the secret of the process, and then again, if they don't discover it at all, they simply cook and scent up the tobacco without taking out any of the gum. The 'colors' are a dead black, blue black or slate, and when the tobacco is used and after it is on a cigar it cracks and peels off. This is because it has been cooked and all its life and vitality has been destroyed. There are things about flavoring tobacco, too, that lots of people don't know much about. Some persons claim that by blowing a little flavor on the fillers that forty or fifty thousand cigars can be flavored for five or six dollars. This would be only about ten or fifteen cents per thousand, and is an impossibility, for by merely blowing the flavor on the tobacco, only the parts of the tobacco which gets the flavor are improved, and when such cigars are smoked one puff is seedy and the next is flavored too much. To prepare a good flavor requires such a knowledge of chemistry as very few possess. It is a regular business now to manufacture cigar flavors, and they are put up in five, ten and twenty-gallon kegs, and in barrels of forty and forty-five gallons. First-class flavors can be bought for one dollar a gallon.

"Another interesting feature of the trade is a process for giving to cigars a very rich, glossy and shining appearance. No matter how dead-looking a cigar may be, the process makes them look as though they were made from the richest, oiliest, finest gummy tobacco, and no matter how old and dried out the cigars may be, the process entirely and perfectly renovates them. The process is a secret. The material used is as clear as water, yet it gives to cigars a much darker and richer appearance. It can not come off from the cigar, has no taste and does not become dull by age. The material costs five dollars a gallon. The fact is the public is continually demanding cigars of better quality, and the only way to keep up with the times is for manufacturers to improve their tobacco to the fullest extent. The way to do this is to throw aside all prejudice and old-fashioned notions. The looks of cigars sells them, and if the wrappers are dark and shiny they will sell well every time; that is my experience."—*N. Y. Mail and Express.*

WHEAT SOWING.

Some Facts Taught by a Farm Experience of Twenty Years.

During our farm experience of twenty years, every year of which we have raised wheat, we fancy we have learned one or two things; that is for a light or sandy soil, though as a matter of fact a sandy is heavier than a clay soil. One of the things we have learnt is to plow the oat stubble as soon as possible after harvest. Oats in our rotation always precedes wheat and timothy seeding. Whether farm manure is spread or not, our wheat seems to be benefited by a light dressing of a complete fertilizer just before sowing. The land is then rolled and harrowed. For several years we rolled both before and after seeding, but were convinced that it is not a good thing to do. The rolled surface bakes and causes the rain, instead of soaking directly into the soil, to form gutters and to run in little streams here and there. It also appeared that wheat rolled after seeding did not stand the winters so well, being killed out in places.

Who can rationally advise farmers in general as to the quantity of wheat that had best be sown per acre? We can not. Some wheats tiller little, others a good deal. The amount of seed wheat must be determined accordingly. Is your land light or heavy, well or imperfectly drained, rich or poor? Every farmer must consider these questions for himself and sow accordingly. From careful experiments made years ago, we settled upon one and a half bushels to the acre for either Clawson, Silver Chaff or Fultz.—*Rural New Yorker.*

Insanity Among Royalty.

Prof. Hackel writes thus concerning the frequency of insanity among the reigning houses: "Already the famous alienist, Esquirol, proved that the proportion of insane members of governing families to those of the rest of mankind is sixty to one. If similar statistics concerning the hereditary nobility could be gathered, it would probably be found that the aristocracy, too, furnishes a much larger contingent of mental diseases than the ordinary people. The reason lies in the unnatural or one-sided education, and in the artificial separation of the 'privileged' caste from the rest of the world. This favors the development of the dark sides of human nature, which are artificially propagated, and, according to the laws of heredity, transmitted with redoubled power from generation to generation."—*Gartenlaube.*

AN IDIOTIC NOTION.

The Idea That the Democracy Would Attempt to Again Enslave the Colored Man—It Has Gone with the Bloody Shirt.

Another Republican State convention, that of Michigan, has adopted a platform without any allusion to the rights of colored men as distinguished from the rights of white men. Three such platforms in two days constitute a most striking acknowledgement of the success of President Cleveland's Administration in eliminating the negro question from politics. It would not be far out of the way to say that the Republican party has declared "in thunder tones" that there is no longer any such issue, and that the accession of the Democrats to power has been the cause of its disappearance. It is certain that the Republicans never before failed to make the most of it. It is equally certain that they would not fail now to "wave the bloody shirt" if there were any such thing to wave. Moreover, the Republicans in convention assembled are just as keenly alive to the dangers attending Chinese labor, and pauper labor, as the Democrats. It is not that they have forgotten any of the rights or wrongs of the downtrodden and oppressed. They have simply recognized the fact that the ensanguined garment has gone from among us. Surely, nothing could be more easily spared.

The admirable disappearance suggests a few reflections on the last national campaign. We shall not chide the Republicans for their gloomy prophesyings about the dreadful fate of the negro in case Mr. Cleveland were elected President. They mostly believed what they said. But the truth must be told that excessive and exclusive attention to one idea almost always produces an unsettling of the mental balance, and causes the thinker to lose the sense of perspective. This is what Senator Hoar said was the matter with the Mugwumps two years ago. He said that their intense mental strain concerning the "spot" on Mr. Blaine's robe had caused them to lose all sense of the proportion of things. They could not see the impending fate of the negro in case Mr. Cleveland should be elected. They could only see the Mulligan letters. It was nothing to them that four millions of freedmen were about to be handed over to their former masters bound hand and foot. This was a trifle to them compared with a few beggarly railroad bonds. Such obliquity of vision was simply astounding.

The Mugwumps replied that the Democratic party would not dare, even if they were so inclined, to oppress the colored man, since the first recognizable evidence of such intentions would cause them to be hurled from power. They argued that the sense of responsibility for order and good government which power confers would lead this wicked party to be extremely careful in their ways, and that since the welfare of the negro, by reason of his geographical situation, was more dependent upon Democrats than upon Republicans any way, he would, perhaps, be even better off when the responsibility for his good treatment rested wholly upon the ex-rebels. It was argued, also—and this was perhaps the most amazing and impudent pretence of all—that the Democrats were one-half of the American people, and that what was good for them in the long run would be good for the rest of us. This was so opposed to the prevailing Republican conception of things, that no words could be found to characterize the pernicious folly. The conception, shared even by some bankers and college professors, was that the Democrats were not American citizens at all, except in form; that they were really a kind of foreigners reeking with Rum, Romanism and Rebellion, striving to gain control of the Government in order to overthrow it. The blow that Rev. Mr. Burchard struck was a severe one in its effect upon the "Irish contingent," because it expressed the common Republican view of the Democratic party. The Blaine Irishmen recognized its flavor immediately.

Along with the disappearance of the bloody shirt, and largely in consequence of it, there will also disappear the fantastic notion that one-half of the American people are bent upon the destruction of the Government and the establishment of some indescribable pow-wow in its stead. Probably no one who held this belief ever gave himself the trouble to define in his own mind what kind of society Mr. Cleveland and his party would set up on the ruins of the constitution, if they should once get power. Fortunately for all such, they are now spared the necessity of doing so.—*N. Y. Post.*

PRESSING RIGHT ON.

The Democracy of New York Bringing Thieves to Justice, as It Has Always Done—Republican Pretensions.

Several occurrences of recent date signalize the jealous vigilance with which the Democratic party guards its own honor and integrity. It has never taken to itself sufficient credit for its works in this respect—perhaps because it feels that there is no occasion to boast of merely performing an obvious duty. Still its disinclination to make capital out of its reforms has frequently been turned to its disadvantage, its opponents impudently arrogating the merit to themselves as the only real children of light. The Democracy never got the honor it deserved for annihilating the Tweed Ring and sending the chiefs of that bad band of plunderers to State prison or into exile—a purification which was wrought by Charles O'Conor, Samuel J. Tilden and other great leaders of the Democratic party. Republican orators and organs always speak of the Tweed Ring as if it were wholly Democratic in origin and texture, while they depict its disruption as the work of honest and earnest Republicans.

To-day so zealous is the Democratic party in its desire for pure government that through a Democratic mayor and a Democratic Governor it insists that buffoons and petty tricksters as well as great thieves must be kept out or ejected from public office. Yet the Governor receives but grudging and ungracious praise from a large portion of the press for his prompt removal of Squire, who is still in the net of the same Democratic district attorney that hunted down the Broadway franchise jobbers. Under the inspiration and guidance of Governor Hill the Democracy of New York State takes no step backward and condones no wrong-doing.—*N. Y. Graphic.*

——Mr. Blaine's speech is the speech of an advocate, and not the speech of a statesman.—*Providence Journal (Rep.).*

THIRD PARTY TALK.

The Difficulty in the Way of Localizing the Prohibition Question—Mr. Frye and Mr. Blaine Do Not Agree.

Mr. Blaine's remarks in his speech on the Prohibitionists, be it observed, are directed exclusively to the people of the State of Maine.—*Dayton Journal.*

The same fact has been remarked by some of the best of our Democratic commentators. The rest of his speech was especially shaped as a "key-note" to the Republicans of the whole country, but he dared not thus to treat the question of prohibition. He preferred to consider it as a local issue.

Even in thus treating it he has raised a storm of discontent. The Prohibitionists of his own party are after him with a sharp stick; and St. John, who lost him New York and the Presidency in 1884, is coming to Maine to help them. He joins in the charge of the Maine Prohibitionists that Mr. Blaine is trying to serve both God and Mammon—that "he preaches Prohibition and works for free rum."

His old lieutenant, Senator Frye, is working him great mischief by a violent preaching of that which he does not practice. That he is not himself adverse to the wine which is red in the cup, and to the champagne which bubbles lusciously in the long-necked glass, is well known; but he had the hardihood in his Houlton speech to utterly disregard Mr. Blaine's advice, and to exhibit himself as a Prohibitionist of the most ultra type. "I am a Prohibitionist," said he, "and I believe in its enforcement to the bitter end. I am in favor of the Republican party shouldering Prohibition, and I know that in time the party would conquer under that banner."

This is not the first nor the last evidence that Senator Frye has given in late years of his willingness to stick a little knife into Mr. Blaine's cause. Here is another passage from his same Houlton speech, which has set the country to wondering and has fairly startled Mr. Blaine's friends.

"If you see a man marching through the streets marked 'I am an honest man,' distrust him at once. You take a magnificent bridal dress, with its ribbons and splendid laces, and put it on exhibition with a little ink spot on its skirt, and you will find plenty of men and women who will see nothing but that spot. Now, the people of this country, with an exquisite fidelity to the best interest of the Nation, saw the little bit of a smirch on the skirt of Mr. Blaine's coat, and, therefore, voted that Mr Cleveland, a man who was smirched from head to foot, should be President."

Here is an open confession of one of Maine's Republican Senators, before a great public meeting, that there was "a smirch on Mr. Blaine's coat." It is singular, is it not?

But, returning to the Prohibition question, Mr. Blaine will speedily find that, as a professed national leader of his party, he can not confine his public declarations upon this question to the State of Maine. We wholly mistake the signs of the times if, in the next two years, Prohibition does not play a greater part in the politics of this country than ever before. In Maine, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Ohio and Michigan Prohibition "third parties" promise this year to control the balance of power, and to determine the result of the State elections. If this shall prove true, then in the national contest of 1888 we shall witness a vote for the Prohibition National ticket such as never before has been dreamed of. The Plumed Knight will not be able to maintain his position in the dark. He will be forced to come out from behind his concealing platitudes and to declare whether he is "for or against."—*Cincinnati Enquirer.*

BLAINE'S DISHONESTY.

The Continental Fabricator from Maine Charging the Democracy with Being Responsible for the Labor Troubles.

In his speech, to the preparation of which a year was devoted, at Sebago Lake, the other day, Blaine called attention to the labor strikes, and insinuated that the policy of the Democratic party was responsible for them. It would be difficult to imagine a more reckless or untruthful accusation. Does Blaine forget the railway strikes of a few years ago, when the militia of nearly every State in the Union was called to arms, and even the regular army had to be employed in saving property and preventing bloodshed? The Democrats were not in power then, for the Republicans had every thing their own way, and even in Pennsylvania, where the State has launched out millions of dollars to railroad companies for damage done by strikers, not a Democrat was in a State office. Which party was in power when the telegraph operators' strike occurred and paralyzed trade for weeks? Who was responsible for the strike in the Hocking valley, Ohio, in the year 1884, which kept the country at fever heat for months, and blood trickled down the bleak hills of that coal region? It was shown at the time that Blaine was a stockholder in the Hocking valley company, which imported Hungarian miners to starve natives into subjection. The continental fabricator from Maine ought to steer clear of the subject of strikes, for the fact is well known that labor agitation was foreign to this country until the Republican party came into power. Scarcely had Blaine's falsehoods been scattered broadcast over the land when the news was telegraphed from Pittsburgh that nail mills, which have been idle for a long time, were about to start full blast under satisfactory arrangements with employes. It is strange that a man who has been in public life twenty-five years as Blaine has should stand up before an intelligent people and utter such malicious falsehoods as he is handing out by wholesale. Does this impudent man who was steeped in corruption think the American people dolts, ready to accept as truth his falsehood? The game he is playing is a desperate one but it will fail of its object, for the voters of this country know the man who wrote "burn this letter," sold his vote as a representative of the citizens of Maine for Little Rock and Fort Smith stock, and attempted to rob poor Peru so that he might share the bogus claims of a French adventurer. Is it to be presumed that such a man, no matter what he may say, will have weight with thinking men who have the best interests of the country at heart? The glamor with which the blatherskite has surrounded his words will give way to honest penetration and will stand forth as the utterances of a man destitute of common honesty.—*Buffalo Times.*

——Blaine wants the Prohibitionists to vote for the Republican candidates, and Blaine's lieutenant, Frye, is using his persuasive efforts in the same direction. He begins by calling the Prohibitionists "impudent, unblushing scoundrels." He probably intends them to understand that he regards them as above flattery.—*Detroit Free Press.*

DRESS AS AN ART.

Some Flippant, Though Very Useful Trifles in a Woman's Education.

Undoubtedly it is the greatest mistake in the world for any girl to regard dress as her sole end and aim in life. It begets a host of frivolous cares, none the less galling in that they are really absurd, and pitches one's life and purpose in a trifling key. But too great a carelessness in this matter is to be deprecated. Outward appearances have much to do with first impressions, and a woman with the wisdom of Portia and wit of Rosalind would be the reverse of attractive if she displayed a crumpled collar and ill-fitting gown, composed of colors that "wear," as the French say.

"Costly thy habit as thy purse can buy," says the worldly-wise Polonius, and he continues with unimpeachable advice on style. There is nothing where fitness can be more fully regarded or ignored than in this matter of dress. Not only fitness for social condition, but personal appearance and peculiarities. Really, it is rarely that any two persons can dress alike becomingly, unless some very unostentatious style and color is chosen; color and fit are the two prime requisites in a becoming gown. This matter of color is always trying, in more senses than one, unless one is born with an artistic sense of harmony—which, alas! is not the good fortune of all. Thrice blessed is the woman whose eye instantly sees the harmony of color; who can always pick out the correct hues for every combination.

To make dress truly an art, we must take into account all the personality of the wearer. Thus, a young girl should wear simply made frocks of some unostentatious material. During the summer she should confine herself as much as poss'ble to thin light-colored fabrics; in the winter, soft woolens; if she desires silk, it should be soft surah, or else India silk. I am sorry to say a great many country girls look upon a stiff black silk gown, cracking with jet, as the hight of their ambition in dress. A plain black silk is a very useful gown, and often has a sort of demure dressiness about it—don't you remember Polly?—Miss Alcott's "Old Fashioned Girl," with her best black silk—but there are plenty of other things, more suitable for a girl. An older woman who has lost her youthful bloom, may wear richer fabrics, of dark and undecided colors.

We must always take figure into account. A large person, inclining to corpulence, must use light colors very sparingly, and carefully avoid straggling figures, large plaids or bayadere stripes. Perpendicular stripes, if not too large, will appear to lessen the bulk of the wearer. Consequently, a thin woman must avoid these stripes, which would make her appear like unto a gridiron. Velvets and brocades may be recommended to slender women, silks and satins to their plumper sisters. But excessively stout women must not wear very shiny fabrics; stuffs which absorb rather than reflect the light should be chosen. Similarly, short or stout women must avoid fussiness in trimming. Conspicuous ruffles or fichus must not be worn on the street. A plain ruche or linen collar only is admissible. Some women can not wear the stiff collar; the ruche is allowable with them. In colors, one sober hue may be chosen for the gown, lightened by some little touch of brilliant color, as a sort of keynote.

Brown is a color universally becoming to blonde or brunette, but dirty-looking, undecided brown should never be chosen. Light colors increase the wearer's color; darker ones reduce it. Thus a pale blonde may wear light blue or green, but navy or myrtle would give a sallow tint. Pale brunettes must wear very light or very dark colors. Ruddy brunettes may wear decided tints—no neutrals. White is very becoming, and so is clear yellow. If not natural, the sense of harmony in color may be acquired, and since the art of dress is incomplete without it, it is one of the necessary trifles in a woman's education.—*Rural New Yorker.*

WOMEN ON WHEELS.

The Attractions of Bicycling and Tricycling for the Gentler Sex.

At the recent meeting of the "League of American Wheelmen" in Boston several excursions were made in the suburbs by parties of twenty or thirty ladies, enjoying the fine roads that lead out of that city through Brookline and the Newtons. Happening to fall into conversation with one of these ladies, whom I took at first for a young girl riding a tandem tricycle with her brother, I discovered the pair to be mother and son, the latter twenty-two years of age. The mother told me that she had learned to ride the machine in Liverpool, Eng., where she belonged to a club of one hundred and sixty ladies, but she was now the only representative of her sex in a local club on Long Island. This gives pretty nearly the proportion, I suppose, of ladies rid ng tricycles in England and in America, the difference being due to the fact that we had the bicycle first from the mother country, and moreover to the great superiority of the English roads. But our native enterprise and invention have now taken such hold upon these little vehicles that it is probable there will be soon more among them of American than of English make, and the rapid substitution of two-track for three-track tricycles makes the difference in roads less momentous. The meaning of this is that the little steering wheel, which in the early tricycles was set in the middle, making a track distinct from that of the two large wheels, is now placed on one side, so that in a rough road it is only needed to look out for two smooth tracks instead of three. The rider of a bicycle, being obliged to have only one smooth track, can generally find it in still rougher roads, and will have this permanent advantage, as well as in speed; but for women, as well as for men past youth, the tricycle offers a great discovery. It is, however, a more expensive amuement than tennis or croquet, a good outfit hardly costing less than from $120 to $150.—*Boston Globe.*

—On the ground between the railroad tracks near the Pennsylvania coal shed below the station at Harrisburg, a whip-poorwill has built a nest and reared her brood. Cars and engines pass within a foot of the nest almost every minute of the day, yet she was not the least frightened. The other day a well-known engineer, whose engine was taking coal, saw the mother bird and the nest, in the latter an egg. When he returned in the evening the egg was gone and in its place a little bird, the mother of which fed it, while a number of people watched the process. The kind-hearted railroaders watch the nest, and when the young birds fly on the track they put them back again.—*Pittsburgh Post.*

READING FOR THE YOUNG.

THE BOYS AND THE APPLE.

Little Tommy and Peter and Archy and Bob
Were walking one day when they found
An apple; 'twas mellow and rosy and red
And lying alone on the ground.

Said Tommy: "I'll have it." Said Peter: "'Tis mine."
Said Archy: "I've got it; so there!"
Said Bobby: "Now, let us divide in four parts
And each of us boys have a share."

"No, no!" shouted Tommy. "I'll have it myself."
Said Peter: "I want it, I say."
Said Archy: "I've got it, and I'll have it all;
I won't give a morsel away."

Then Tommy he snatched it, and Peter he fought,
('Tis sad and distressing to tell!)
And Archy held on with his might and his main,
Till out from his fingers it fell.

Away from the quarrelsome urchins it flew,
And then, down a green little hill
That apple it rolled, and it rolled and it rolled
As if it would never be still.

A lazy old brindle was nipping the grass
And switching her tail at the flies,
When all of a sudden the apple rolled down
And stopped just in front of her eyes.

She gave but a bite and a swallow or two—
That apple was seen nevermore!
"I wish," whimpered Archy and Peter and Tom,
"We'd kept it and cut it in four."

—*Sydney Dayre, in N. Y. Independent.*

JUST FOR FUN.

The Terrible Consequences of a Thoughtless Boy's Practical Joke.

In a beautiful park carefully kept and only lately thrown open for the use of children, the visitor often sees, holding tightly to the hand of her sad-faced mother, a little girl beautiful in form and feature but no light of intellect brightens those blue eyes. Though getting to be a large girl of eleven, Margie is not able to answer a simple question intelligently or tell the difference between a horse or a cat.

Margie Ray is an imbecile, which means that her reasoning powers, or intellect are impaired. Imbecility is very different from insanity; the former means a future devoid of all brightness, hopeless sameness, all is a blank to the vacant mind. Margie Ray's body grows, her hair is a bright golden, and complexion clear and smooth, and she is always gentle and easily controlled, yet her mother weeps bitter tears over her little girl, who must grope through life's journey in darkness, and all because of a big boy's fun, which worked Margie such mischief.

One evening in the winter it was snowing fast and furiously. Margie was a wee toddler of two years, just big enough to get papa's slippers and set them before the grate fire, and carry her small chair close beside his easy one, just where she could lay her head on his knee while he told such "looful stories," and whistled lovely tunes for his "girlie." Mamma Ray was flying around frying pink slices of ham, molding cream biscuits and baking a cake for baby. She didn't see the big boy of twelve, with a sheet wrapped about him and wearing a hideous false face, come creeping silently into the room and walk close up to happy, innocent little Margie, who stood with her rosy face pressed close to the window pane, softly singing "papa's tummin to mamma an' Margie."

Mrs. Ray had just finished sprinkling currants and sand sugar over Margie's cake, when shrill screams from baby frightened her. She caught just one glimpse of the boy; hurrying to Margie, she tried to calm her, but the mischief was done.

Papa Ray came home to find his daughter in convulsions, which lasted at intervals the entire night, and then they knew that Margie was in danger of being sick mentally so long as she lived, yet they hoped for better things as the years brought strength to the body.

Said Mamma Ray: "I will deal so gently with the child, that she may live over this and out grow it."

"Do not hope, madame, it is no use," said the physician. But mother-like, she did hope for light to come to her Margie, as years rolled on.

But Margie never grew one day older in feeling. In vain Mrs. Ray takes her to hear sweet music, to look upon beautiful objects, or reads aloud sweet, pure stories such as little folks like to hear; Margie's eyes do not sparkle with pleasure, and her stammering tongue is silent, she being unable to speak many words.

The boy who for fun dressed up to scare Margie has shed bitter tears of repentance, and after a long, severe struggle, the stricken parents have forgiven him, as they hope to be forgiven.

In an agony of tears Mrs. Ray sometimes catches the little girl up in her arms, saying: "I'm so glad my precious one, that there's light and joy for such as you in Heaven."

Boys often think it great fun to scare little ones, not dreaming of the hurt a sudden shock often inflicts upon the nervous organization of the wee ones.

A brave boy will not be so cruel and craven as to take advantage of the weak and young. It is a poor sort of fun which causes pain to others. Let us remember that practical jokes are often cruel.—*Ella Guernesey, in Golden Rule.*

ABOUT TOADS.

How They Catch and Dispose of Their Food—The Gardener's Friend—Changing Their Clothes.

Did you ever sit quietly and watch a toad catching his supper? If not, just try it, and you will find that it is a very interesting as well as an amusing sight. There he sits, on the edge of the path, his bright, bulging eyes fixed intently on a fly that has just alighted close to him—so very close, in fact, that you wonder what the toad is waiting for, since he has only to dart out his tongue and whisk the fly down his throat; but he does not do it. No; he stays motionless, his eyes twinkling with eagerness; and if only that fly knew what we know, the toad would never touch him, for all he has to do is to keep perfectly still until his foe grows tired of waiting. Yes, that is the secret of the toad's delay. Whatever the insect that he has selected for his supper, it is safe from destruction until it moves; but then, lo! it is gone like a flash. The quiver of a wing, the twitching of a leg, is enough to precipitate its doom.

We wonder how many people take heed of the fact that the despised little toad is one of the gardeners' most valued friends, and that he is a regular night watchman over the vegetable gardens? Very few of us know what a very useful fellow this creature is, although some are waking up to the knowledge of it, and among these wise folks are the market-gardeners of London and Paris, who know their value so well that they buy them by the dozen and turn them into their hotbeds, thus preserving their plants from insects. Not only in our gardens are toads extremely useful, but in our houses they are valuable allies; for they do no harm to us, but very much to our sworn enemies, such as cockroaches, moths, crickets, flies, mosquitoes and ants. They need but to see an insect stir, and out flashes that wonderful tongue. And, presto! where is it? Why, down in the little throat, landed at the exact spot where the muscles can seize it and pass it at once to the stomach. And so rapidly is this done that when a large insect, like a cricket, grasshopper or beetle, is swallowed, the sides of the toad may be seen actually twitching, from the struggles of its still lively victim.

Entomologists press our friend the toad into their service in a manner that is as novel as it is comical. They catch him at daybreak from the field or garden, kill him, and turn his stomach wrong side out in a pan of water. Of course all the recently-caught insects float to the surface, at the entomologists' service. This looks like a rather cruel method of studying entomology, does it not? But the truth is, that the humble little toad is a more expert catcher and discoverer than his human superior, and out of his rifled store-house come treasures in the shape of rare and tiny nocturnal insects that but for his industry would never have been known or classified by our savants.

It is not alone winged insects that the toad feasts upon. There is nothing he likes better, for a change of diet, than a nice, fat worm, and, as the children say, "it is as good as a play" to see him eating a worm—one that wriggles and twists and squirms as if it knew it had fallen into the hands of a relentless enemy. And it is literally the hands of its captor that are fatal to it, for it would be simply impossible for the toad to swallow his wriggling victim, did he not use his fore paws exactly as we use our hands. As it is, he is sublimely indifferent to his squirming. He sits calmly down with it in his mouth, lifts one paw, and gives it a push further into his mouth, and then he swallows, and down it goes, just a little way. Then up comes the other paw for another push, and at last, by alternate pushes and swallows, the poor worm vanishes, and our toad sits quietly at ease, with all the satisfaction of a full stomach twinkling in his eyes.

If any one supposes that our friend the toad is obliged to wear but one suit of clothes all his life, that person is mistaken. He orders a complete new outfit every now and then, of a most expert work-woman, one Dame Nature; and as for his old suit, he—well, we will see how he takes it off first, before disposing of it, which he does in a most unique manner. Dame Nature, working silently and secretly, as is her way, makes him a new suit beneath the old one, and then kindly helps him to remove the outgrown garments, so to speak. This done, our toad commences to undress by rubbing his elbows hard against his sides, and pressing downward. Directly, the old suit bursts open along his back, and he keeps on rubbing until he has worked it all in folds on his sides and hips; then he seizes one of his hind legs with his "hands," and hauls off one leg of his trousers; and next the other leg is served in the same way. Before he takes off the rest of his suit, he disposes of his cast-off trousers by rolling them up neatly and shoving them down his throat. Then, by raising and lowering his head, and swallowing little by little, he hauls off his coat until he comes to the sleeves. Grasping one of these with the opposite hand, he drags it off, wrong side out, and swallows it also, rubbing his neck at the same time, so that his collar, cravat, and, in fact, every vestige of his old suit, disappears altogether. Who shall say that the toad is not a marvel of political economy? Who of us, however poor, eats up his old clothes?

Our little friend is a great stay-at-home. Indeed, he is so noted in this respect that wonderful stories have been told about him regarding it, such as his going into a hole in a tree and staying there so long that the tree had time to spread its bark over the entrance, and seal up the toad in its tiny house. There are other stories, too, of a young toad having crept through a little crevice into a hollow rock, to hibernate through the winter, and being unable to leave it in the spring, because of the rapid increase in its size. And yet, in both these cases the toads were found alive and hearty, even after years must have elapsed since their imprisonment.

Now, these stories are true thus far; but when you go on to state that these toads were hermetically sealed up, and lived without food or air, they go further than the truth warrants. In every case on record, it has been proven that some slight aperture existed, whence both air and insects could and did pass in to the prisoner.—*Golden Days.*

ADULTERATED MOLASSES.

A Boston Firm Which Makes Doctrinating Processes a Specialty.

We have had a very interesting case on trial here lately that has raised a question whether a man who passes off counterfeit half dollars as genuine is any worse than one who palms off doctored tea, butter or molasses as genuine. A firm has been on trial for doctoring molasses by mixing with it a poisonous substance, pretended to be neutralized by some quality of the molasses, and making an inferior or worthless article take the place of good—to be sold low to cheap grocers, enabling them to sell at the highest price. This latter fact, I think, did not appear on the trial, but the trial recalled one occasion when it was made prominent. Many years ago there was in Commercial street a cellar devoted exclusively to the doctrinating process, by which the poorest molasses was made to represent the best. Probably the business has been kept up ever since, and millions of dollars have been taken out of the pockets of consumers to swell the bank account of unscrupulous grabbers for wealth who live in their villas on ill-gotten gains. The plea that the adulterating matter is not poison is not valid, for the article, if harmless, is a fraud, and the sale presumes upon the ignorance of the purchaser, in selling him a false thing, or upon the cupidity of customers who buy for the purpose of deceiving. It seems to be in vain that laws are made to secure honesty in the making of articles of domestic consumption. As Artemus Ward said, we are sure of nothing in an eating house but hash, and even honestly prepared hash may show a swindle in its pepper that is two-thirds terra alba. Milk is about the only thing, beyond eggs, that can be confidently relied on as being of the first water.—*Boston Cor. Hartford Post.*